The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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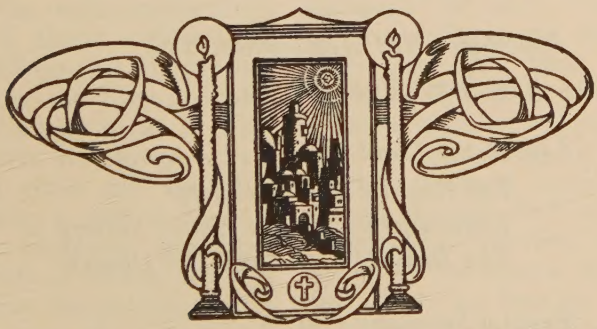

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Editor

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Concerning a Changing Christian Ministry

The Editor

THE New York *Times* has given ample space in its issues of April 4 and 5 to a summary of what is happening to the Protestant Christian ministry. Its status, on the whole, has never been so thoroughly examined. The study has been made through the initiation of the Russell Sage Foundation and Union Theological Seminary and under the directions of the Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Blizzard. Sixteen hundred detailed questionnaires were sent out to graduates of five representative seminaries. Eleven hundred and fifty replies, carefully filled out, have been received. The result is a body of possible documentation which will need a year for complete organization. The *Times* supplies interesting material. The representative Protestant minister is almost middle aged. He lives in a midwest city. He has two children and a car and lives in a six-room house with a wife whom he cherishes beyond words. He belongs to representative local clubs and such like gatherings. Nothing is said of his local meetings or more immediate clerical fellowships. He reads as he can but does not feel that he has time enough for the study he ought to do. He is both contented and discontented in his work. On the whole his church is gaining both in membership and attendance. But he is not sure of the deeper meanings of what he does.

He is sure of certain things. Preaching is losing primacy and appeal. Personal relationships are becoming more demanding and important. In general he and his advisors conclude that his ministry must be re-examined as to the way of functions. Theology needs to be restated in terms people can understand, and adapted more effectively to the people and their needs. He is not only a preacher of the Gospel but a community leader and a teacher of social ethics who must try to do his part in guiding his congregation through the complex moral and social issues of the day—all of which the *Times* sets out with clarity and fullness of detail. Such studies leave the Protestant ministry face to face with spacious challenges and indicate the forms they are taking and the lines to be followed. Such studies are bound to have a far reaching influence upon our theological callings and Divinity schools and modify their curricula almost fundamentally.

But the question holds: Are these inquiries, rich as they are, likely to prove so radically new as to change the offices of the ministry and the functions or the training of the clergy. This editor thinks not, for and amongst themselves, ministers have been doing something like this for a long time. He thinks the diminished influence of preaching and the increased complexity of the minister's function the most important of the indicated changes. And amongst all this, statistical and otherwise, he considers the eclipse of the sermon the most significant. There has been so far in the long history of the Protestant church nothing to take the place of preaching. In general the ministers in their own thinking recognize the significance of the changes, of which they are a part, but it is good for us to know more precisely where we are and more definitely where we are going.

* * *

Meanwhile the editor, whose life and work now lie outside these controversial regions, has been reading some time-tested books he considers definitely worthwhile—(one of the complaints the questionnaire has voiced is that the average minister does not get time to read)

—Thoreau's *Walden* for one thing. This the editor thinks is one of those "desert island books"—a book you can take with you to some unpeopled island and live with the rest of one's life, really never growing weary of it. Few books are more fascinating nor tell so well a really undramatic story. But those two years by Walden Pond, as Thoreau retells them have made literature and, in a way, a history which never grows old and is retold generation after generation. Few books have gone through more successive editions and the sales have grown rather than diminished.

Its charm is elusive. Much of it was in the pond itself as Thoreau knew and loved it. It was a jewel set in the greenest of settings as Thoreau knew it. Its waters were sweet and crystal clear. It was fed by deep, interior springs of a purity beyond words—and a charm beyond telling. Thoreau has made of it a classic setting for his solitudes and his seekings. He wrote and rewrote till it became the major occupation of a not too long life. He had a genius for the perfect word perfectly used and his writings are like lapidaries' writings. He worked with words as a jeweler works with gems and left them settings of enduring beauty, until reading and rereading him may become almost a life occupation—and wisely profitable.

* * *

Mr. Geo. H. T. Knoble has written and McGraw has published a fascinating book on "our American weather." He considers it month by month, region by region and phenomenon by phenomenon. The writer is a trained meteorologist and what he has written has a solid scientific factual basis. Our inexhaustible interest in weather ways are all considered and whence and why. Few weather books answer more questions more clearly. Heat and cold, wind and calm—the sequence of the seasons are all there. This too is a good book to live with and a fascinating book of which to ask questions.

What is left of the gradual liquidations of one's library is, amongst so many other things the revelation of the dominant bend of one's mind. The editor in his early ministry inherited a parsonage with ample and empty book shelves and this in a period when the book agent was an institution and installment payments were encouraged. So he filled his book shelves and in time emptied them. The editor still has left five volumes of John Burroughs, beautifully done by the Riverside Press, and dated at the turn of century. Burroughs wrote with a charming style and about an inclusive list of topics in which literature and nature played a dual part. He was a keen observer widely read. He is a good author to grow old with. The editor is grateful for the instinct which lead him to keep these volumes.

* * *

This is being written the day before Good Friday and all the memories and hopes of Easter brighten what is really a dull, dark morning. It will all be over long before this issue reaches its readers, but the season is replete in maturing deposits. Out of such cumulative experience our spirits are enriched.

It will be May when this is in the mails—May has always been well spoken of by the poets. It is a time of winding up a good many things in a church—and getting ready to wind up more—and the QUARTERLY has little to add except to come back to where this piece of writing started; in the almost meticulous examination of the current status of the average Protestant minister. The editor believes that this ministry needs a renaissance of preaching. There is still in the living and spoken word a power which resides nowhere else. It has a power to unify a ministry, enrich minister and congregaton. All lend their ultimate meaning to the endless detail in which, if the minister does not take care, he will lose both his church and his vocation.

Strengthening the Ministry

The Rev. Roy Linden Minich

Malden, Massachusetts

Presented before the Springfield Pre-Lenten Ministers' Conference, February 15, 1955

FOR some years it was our custom to invite a group of ministers to spend the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday with us in our church in Malden. We invited them as our guests and suggested that they come prepared to spend the entire day. Some of you may remember one or more of those meetings. We had no clearly defined program, but we had a definite purpose. We were there to find guidance and strength for the opportunities immediately ahead. We believed that some things could be accomplished only through meditation and prayer. We believed that by being together we could light some fire within each other. Many of us found those meetings a great blessing. Out of them grew this series of Study Conferences in this historic church. My recounting of this bit of history, to the Committee on Convocations, resulted in my being asked, against my better judgment, to address this gathering on what was our original theme and purpose, namely, the strengthening of the ministry. I can say only that I wish someone of wider experience and greater wisdom had been selected for this important task.

If I have any qualifications they lie in the area of a rather long pastoral experience. I do know something of the deep satisfactions as well as the bitter disappointments inherent in our work. I, too, have felt the fear which drives sleep away and the sense of inadequacy which makes one want to hide in the face of heavy demands, not so much upon our time, but upon our spiritual resources.

We shall address ourselves, not so much to the reasons for remaining in this work, but more particularly to finding the resources necessary if we are to be workmen of whom the Master need not be ashamed. If we discuss some of the weaknesses most likely to be found in ourselves, or others, it is not to condemn them, but rather that by thinking together we may find some help and wisdom for their correction.

On a former occasion, when I ventured to express some of my concern about the state of our ministry, one layman present felt that what I said grew out of a spirit of frustration, another was convinced that I was looking for a new position. May I assure you both were mistaken.

It may help you in following my presentation if I tell you now that I shall first discuss some of the reasons why men become discouraged, and a few leave the pastorate. I shall indicate that some of the difficulties lie within our own personalities, and some grow out of our environment. We will then go on to suggest some things the fellowship may do for us, some things we may do for ourselves and, finally, some things God will do for us, if we are willing.

Even a casual contact with the work of the church as a whole has resulted in two fundamental convictions. First, a growing pride in my fellow ministers, both in the pastorate and in executive positions in our Conferences and Societies. Second, a deepening conviction that the impact of the church on any situation is conditioned by the quality of

its ministry. If the evaluation of our life and work which follows should appear to be somewhat critical, try to remember that back of it is appreciation, admiration and often deep affection.

There appears to be a rather general feeling that the morale of our ministers is not so high as it should be. That is not revealed so much by statistics as by attitudes and conversations. These reveal, all too frequently, fears, frustrations, resentments and a sense of defeat. Quite interestingly, these are not confined to men of any particular type of church or parish. In a single day, not long since, I talked with three men, all capable, all relatively successful pastors of growing churches, yet all following definite programs of preparation which will enable them to leave the pastorate at the end of two years. I will not reveal the reasons given. You can hear them, or similar ones, by listening in at the general conversation of almost any group of ministers.

Some Reasons for Failure in the Ministry

It seems wise, at the outset, to suggest a few of the more common reasons for failure in the ministry. In this area I have relied upon the advice of some trusted friends as well as my own observations. We will not get anywhere unless we face the fact that many, perhaps most, of the causes of failure lie within ourselves. These personal causes of failure are so difficult to discover. Those who know and love us are blinded to our faults, or silent about them through mistaken loyalty. When those who are not friends speak, their words are more likely to arouse resentment than promote healing. It is as hard to get our friends to be honest with us as it is for us to be honest with ourselves.

At the risk of being misunderstood, and perhaps even criticized, we will mention a few of the more common personal limitations. One is a lack of the capacity for sustained work, at high speed, with reasonable concentration. It so happens that some men are born tired, and a few of them are ordained to the ministry. A decreasing number still enter the ministry in the mistaken belief that they are entering upon a life of cultured leisure. The leisurely pastorate usually results in a dead church.

A second lack which can be fatal to both pastor and people is the inability, or unwillingness, to put first things first. Some men seem to find serving tables more congenial than saving souls. Perhaps one reason why we agitate ourselves so much about peripheral things is because we are a little afraid of the responsibility for things central. Not all men who are successful in the community are a blessing to their church. It is good to have outside interests, but when they become a substitute for doing our particular job, they are hurtful. When a church calls a pastor they are not likely to be content with a Junior Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.

I am told there are still a few "prima donnas" in the church. If so, I must take it on hearsay. Personally I have not met any in these latter years. A "prima donna" is one who has never quite succeeded in putting away "childish things." He is temperamental. He likes to hide behind the cloth. He wants special privileges. He takes himself so seriously that other people find it difficult to feel that way about him. "Prima donnas" have a poor posture for cross bearing.

A much more real difficulty which men have to fight is a lack of fundamental interest in people. I suspect that is a rather common problem. There is no doubt but that it is easier to find companionship in great ideas than in small people. But men, too, are great. A few years ago the usual way of escaping people was by interest in causes. More recently, an interest in theology has been the substitute for people. It should be said, on the other hand, that some men leave the pastorate just because of a very deep interest in people. These are the men who find their way into institutional chap-

laincies. Lack of interest in people is never successfully disguised. Years ago one of my friends told me, "I hate people, but of course they never know it." But they knew it all too well. He was not long in the pastorate.

I am sure that one of the most tragic reasons for leaving the ministry is decay of faith. Small beliefs and youthful enthusiasm are plants much too tender to survive being transplanted into the actual world unless they are carefully watered and wisely nurtured. Some men realize that only when it is too late. "Mine own vineyard have I not kept," is the burden of their confession. One cannot light the way for another if his own light is flickering out. Some men have found oil for their lamps and have gone on to larger usefulness. Others, unwilling to pay the price for oil, try to substitute a highly polished lamp for the flame. But lamps, however beautiful, are useless, without oil.

Some men—a few—leave the ministry because of their wives. I am sure you will agree with me that most Mistresses of the Manse are superior to their husbands. Still, occasionally, one finds a minister handicapped in his work by a wife who is socially inferior or spiritually inadequate. While I personally do not approve of the marriage of students before the completion of their theological education, I can see that one justification for these early marriages is that the wife may secure some valuable training along with her husband. I am firmly convinced, however, that this training should be largely in some different area, so that they complement each other and do not become competitors. A few courses given in our seminaries by successful wives of ministers might prove a great help to the wives of married students.

Some Difficulties Growing Out of Our Environment

Perhaps we have said enough about the difficulties which grow out of personal characteristics, and should now go on to suggest with equal brevity, a few of the causes of discouragement which grow out of our environment. Some men leave the ministry through disillusionment about the so-called Christian churchmanship in some local churches. Not all churches are a "Society of Saints." If they were, they would not need us. If these remarks were addressed to laymen, there are some pertinent things which might be said here. I will remind you, simply, of a comment made by Dr. Luccock in this very room on a similar occasion a year or two ago when he suggested that, unlike Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress,* a good many people come to church to get something off their chest rather than off their back. The most dangerous element in a difficult environment is that your spirit may take on its colorations. You will never lift up anything if you allow yourself to be pulled down. You must exercise self control not only in dealing with unfriendly people, but even more, in keeping yourself friendly and free from bitterness. One of the sanest rules of our household is that even in the complete privacy of our home we do not allow ourselves to speak unkindly of anyone. If you are interested in a technique which I have found helpful, it is to go to the church at night, sit in the pew of someone whose friendship you do not have, and to pray for him. I know there is great help to be found in doing that. I have been suggesting it for years to some of my brethren. Many times they, too, have found it a blessing.

An element in the environment which has caused much alarm to our ministers is the limited period of age acceptability. In extreme cases it may be limited to as few as seven years—from twenty-eight to thirty-five. One of the requests which came to the Commission on the Ministry some years ago was for a "man between thirty-two and thirty-five years of age, preferably with a Scotch accent." This is

an area in which laymen should do some serious thinking. Too many fine young men are being turned away from the ministry because they fear their possible usefulness may be cut short before they reach the fullness of their powers.

I am sure this cannot be true, save perhaps in exceptional cases, but there are those, and their number seems to be increasing, who feel that the local pastor must support all denominational programs or suffer. A remark comes back to me over the years. It was said with great bitterness. "There are no good openings except for 'Yes' men." If this feeling should grow, it will destroy our freedom at its very roots. If this fear ever should be justified it would result in all the evils of a closely controlled organization and give us none of its safeguards.

May we mention just one more thing under this general heading of external reasons for discouragement. It is the economic situation in which many of our brethren find themselves. Almost everyone can endure financial hardship for themselves. The pain comes when other members of the family suffer. I know that sometimes these difficulties are due, in part, to inadequate management of personal finances. I am aware that we have not been called to ride in Cadillacs, but to carry crosses. But I also know that there is a minimum of income below which life cannot be maintained with dignity and self-respect. Not many men have the economic stability or the philosophic attitude of mind to refuse an increase in salary in the manner of a revered old friend serving in a small New Hampshire village. He did it in three sentences. "You are now paying me all I need. You are now raising all you can afford. Furthermore, I have a feeling I am receiving all I am worth." This matter of adequate income already is receiving much thought by some of our best minds. Some of our Conference leaders are alert and active in the matter. There are reasons to believe that the time is near when none of our pastors will need to divide their time and deplete their energy by accepting part-time employment in other fields.

If You Can Quit the Ministry, Do So

These appear to be some of the conditions affecting the morale of ministers. Before suggesting some ways in which conditions may be improved I would pause to say just one thing to any discouraged man. It is this, "If you can quit the ministry, quit." I have tried it several times and failed. Even when notified of my election as Professor of Religion at a certain college and an appointment as its Chaplain, I still could not leave the pastorate. I know what Paul meant when he said, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." I know that many men feel that way. Lewis T. Reed was given a leave of absence from his church to help create our Annuity Fund. Later he was asked to remain as its executive. He returned to his pastorate. I remember his saying to me, "The first time something goes wrong, I shall call myself a fool for doing this." Then after a moment he added, "We would not be ministers unless there was something of the fool in us." Paul seemed to have a similar thought when he wrote, "If any man among you seemest to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."

Some of you may recall the statement of Richard Roberts when he was tempted to quit the ministry. He could not escape the words of Peter when Jesus asked him if he wanted to go away. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Judas, of course, did quit, but the alternative was not exactly desirable. If a man can quit, he has never made a complete commitment.

Some Things the Fellowship Can Do

Thus far we have suggested that some of our difficulties are the result of personality traits or undisciplined living and some of the causes of discouragement

grow out of our environment. Lest we be considered too long on diagnosis and too short on prescription we must now think in terms of cure. We shall begin by attempting to discover some things the fellowship can do for us.

Some of the difficulties of the local pastor grow out of a sense of loneliness. That may be partly his own fault. I am sure it was in my own case. It may be due to a lack of concern on the part of the brotherhood. You will recall that some years ago an attempt was made upon the life of the President-elect. During the questioning of the would-be assailant he was asked if he belonged to any church or organized group. His reply was very revealing. "No, I belong to nothing, and I suffer." Quite so! Men who belong to nothing always suffer. We are so formed that we get our joy, usefulness and satisfaction in right relationships.

One of the major problems facing our fellowship is to develop a sense of community which will do some things for us we cannot do for ourselves. The majority of you have played on some athletic team. A good team man always covers for his weaker teammates. The game, not individual glory, is paramount. How greatly that is needed is frequently revealed to those of us who are old enough to serve sometimes as counsellors to our brethren. Some years ago a man came to me at the close of a meeting in one of our midwest cities to talk over his problems. He began by saying that he was frightened. His church was slipping away from him—not without some encouragement from pastors in churches more strategically located. He felt he could not talk with them without embarrassment. He was afraid to discuss his problem with his Conference leader. He was a lonely, discouraged, frightened man. Incidentally, a gathering of his neighbors that very night, with an explanation of the whole situation, resulted in their prayerfully assuming the responsibility of making that pastorate a success. And they did.

Many of the problems of the church are not difficult to see, or too hard to solve, but some are difficult to discuss. Perhaps what I shall say in the next few paragraphs could be thus classified. I have a feeling sometimes that instead of being fellow-workers we are tending to become competitors. The first disciples were. They were doing a lot of thinking and some scheming to get into first place. The chief seat looked more desirable than the towel. They ceased to be competitors and became a fellowship when the Master refused a crown and took the towel instead. Henceforth, when they walked with him, they lived in helpful fellowship. A growing fellowship results from a closer discipleship.

Can it be that we have thought of our fellowship and organization as a means of promoting ourselves rather than helping our brethren. The purpose of all our groups is not to have friends to push us up, but to have comrades in Christ's service. To know the right people, in a Christian sense, is to know the ones whom we can help. The weak rather than the strong should be most sought out in any gathering of Christians. The early days of my own ministry, when I was shy and therefore very standoffish, were enriched by a great soul, J. Percival Huget of Brooklyn. He was always looking for young men whom he might help. I can still see him at Association meetings and State Conferences, not sitting at the head table, but sitting well back in the room at a table filled with lonely young men—all of whom were his guests. He paid for our meals, which was unimportant; he broke for us the bread of friendship, for which we greatly hungered.

Many of the leaders of our Conferences, and others in executive positions, recognize that their first function is that of friend and pastor. If they should ever think of themselves as executives alone, they would miss their highest usefulness. If they should ever allow promotion to bulk larger than evangelism, they would weaken the church of tomor-

row. The growth of a sense of community and the enrichment of the spiritual life of our fellowship, in my opinion, must be their major concern.

When this concern becomes real it brings some definite plan and action. One is the regular gathering of new men, or men in isolated areas, into fellowship gatherings, together with one or more older men, of kindly spirit and with enough wisdom to speak only when questions are asked. That is strengthening the ministry. It also results in our wiser Conference leaders definitely assigning some more mature man to be the spiritual father to every young man beginning his first pastorate.

The unchristian church, which is so likely to destroy the ministry of a sensitive young man, or at least cast a shadow over his entire life, would naturally be the concern of the Association in which it was placed, if we ever develop a proper sense of community. This matter cannot be dealt with adequately in a Council called for the assumption or severance of a pastoral relationship. It can, in our judgment, be handled much more effectively, if several interested ministers, together with a Conference representative, sit down with the church officers for a brotherly discussion of the problem involved.

But the end is not yet. Men entering the ministry might be perhaps more effectively screened. Seminaries are doing that, many of them with great care. But our larger schools serve many different communions with varying standards. Unless we are to have denominational schools there always will be the necessity of depending upon the wisdom of seminary faculties. It would seem that as a fellowship, we should at least make articulate some of the specific concerns we hold as to the selection and training of men for the ministry.

A contribution which our stronger seminaries could make would be in the area of counselling in the field. I do not mean supervised field work. What I mean is the sending out of an experienced pastor to live and work for a few weeks with some recent graduate who is having difficulty finding himself in his work. That would mean meeting with the official boards, sharing in the public service and at the end of a brief period interpreting the church and the minister to each other. That kind of in-the-field fellowship could be most helpful. This, as far as I know, has not been tried. It might be a way in which some of our retired men could render a far reaching, voluntary service.

The whole program of the concern of the fellowship for the individual pastor must stem from our Department of the Ministry. It need not be a substitute for existing agencies, but should give them direction and enthusiasm. There must be some way of extending the professional acceptability of men through the education of our lay people. There must be some professional bench marks more accurate than Year Book statistics. There must be some means of helping men move from one situation to another without affronting their dignity or limiting the freedom of the local church.

It was the privilege of the writer to have had some share in establishing the Department of the Ministry at our General Council Meeting in Grand Rapids. It was set up to do a definite piece of work. Its purpose is clear, its functions defined and its leadership is excellent. It has done many good things. That it has not accomplished more in some of the areas suggested is because of lack of resources and limited personnel. But what happens to our ministry is no minor matter; it is a major concern. Every large forward looking industry spends some time and considerable sums of money in the area of personnel. They know their future is now. The church should recognize that fact also. We know that what happens to our ministers will be the largest determining factor in what is going to happen to our churches. We have recently spent about $300,000 to finance the campaign for increasing our Church Building funds. That money was

wisely spent. It was a small cost for the results achieved. We rejoice in the vision which projected this program. But a church building without an adequately trained, fully consecrated and emotionally adjusted minister, will remain an empty shell. If we must choose between men and materials I prefer to spend my money on men. Much of what we envisioned at Grand Rapids must await an adequately financed, fully staffed Department of the Ministry. I feel sure the Department has already blue-printed possible extensions of its services. If these things can be brought to pass there will be great days ahead.

Some Things We Can Do for Ourselves

Perhaps we should review by saying that thus far we have presented some of the problems facing us and have suggested some of the ways in which the fellowship could and should help. Now may we go on to think for a moment about ways in which we can help ourselves. A method I have long used is to arrange sermon series aimed directly at my own weaknesses. I treat myself without mercy. It is the only time I ever preach for a single individual. It always helps me. Furthermore, I am always amazed to discover how many people think I am speaking directly to them. When you really bear down on yourself you always hit a lot of people.

But to be more specific, we must set for ourselves adequate work programs. A part of the explanation for the phenomenal amount of work accomplished by Russell Conwell was the fact that he tried to work eight hours a day for himself and eight hours for Johnnie Ring, whom he felt had given his life for him. We should at least work a forty-hour week. Many of you feel that you are already doing much more than that. But have you ever kept an accurate work sheet of time actually spent in your work as a pastor. Try it for a month and you may be surprised. At the same time keep a careful record by name of all completed calls and see if you are making the thousand a year you think you are. Sometime when you feel courageous set for yourself the work schedule of the young men in an Officer's Candidate School. Dr. Charles E. Jefferson once said in my hearing that he worked fourteen hours every day of the week. I think he did. I never knew him to be present at a Monday morning Ministers' meeting unless he was the speaker. He spent Monday morning dictating the sermons he had preached the preceding day. He worked wherever he was, summer or winter, and even on train trips would allow himself only brief periods for conversation. He was not unbrotherly; he was busy. One gets the impression sometimes that there is too much general carelessness in the whole range of ministerial performance.

We can help ourselves, not only by increasing the amount of our work, but also by a different thought pattern regarding it. We are prone to think of ourselves as builders. We have a plan for the Church. The plan becomes so important that we are tempted to use people as building material. We forget they are people. You may recall these lines of Dr. George A. Buttrick:

"Some preachers see nothing but things—
Church buildings, year books, card catalogues.
Other preachers see faces—
Faces wistful and sin-scarred, faces lonely yet brave.

The Master saw nothing but faces—"

If people are uncooperative it may be because they resent being used as things. They are people, all of them, the banker and the baker—and the boy. As you know them, so shall your strength be.

I like the words of Frank W. Herriott describing the true minister. "He is a gardener rather than a builder with inert materials; a guide rather than a master; a witness rather than a judge; a sovereign spirit among sovereign spirits

and a sinner among sinners." How suggestive that figure of speech is. A gardener soon learns that God must have his turn in the whole growing process. I grew up on a farm. How often, after we had placed the seed in the soil, have I heard my father say, "Now it is God's turn." Some things like a growing religious experience, or church membership, or even church contributions, cannot be hurried. A child can open a rose bud quicker than nature does, but the flower dies before it is fully born. Our primary function as ministers is to help people grow into mature Christian life and churchmanship. We are called, not to use people, but to help them. It is always a temptation to shape programs so that our wills may be served. Churches that are used, rather than cultivated, do not grow strong.

It seems likely that our mental state will be much improved if we look upon our work as a calling rather than a profession. At least we will escape the temptation to measure our effectiveness by the worldly standards of income, leisure, or retirement provisions. A part of our sense of frustration is due to our having accepted the world's belief that to succeed is to reach the top. Our business is not to reach the top, but to minister by the way. Certainly in the ministry the top is a small area and already much overcrowded. Furthermore, I am not so sure that all the top dwellers are God's delight; they may be his bitterest disappointments. They are if they have put their own success above service in the Master's name.

Of course there are many discouraging situations. Jesus found that out when he preached his first sermon. Paul says that "Even Christ pleased not himself." We cannot always do what we please either. Some fields are hard to cultivate. But I do not know of any parish which will not give you the chance to be a good pastor to someone. There will always be work that needs doing. That is what you asked for when you entered the ministry. You may have to bear some heavy loads. Someone has suggested that the depth of our footprints depends upon the weight of our crosses. The burden bearer has the chance to make a deep impression on his community. Some of you may be old enough to remember the address of Ozora S. Davis at the General Council Meeting in Detroit a quarter century ago. He was the retiring moderator and fatally stricken with a dread disease. I recall especially these words: "It was not when I was putting over something that I was really living. It was when I was putting myself under my own burdens cheerfully, and under the load of another with quiet helpfulness, that I was living." "Si Crucem portas portabit Te." "If you carry the cross, it will carry you." How you meet life in a hard situation can be your most effective sermon.

Wrong attitudes can do so much to destroy the usefulness of any man. One of these is the tendency to take ourselves too seriously. I am not disparaging self-confidence, which is necessary. I am simply saying that one must strive to hold a sane view of oneself. Parishes, in their desire to be warmly courteous, sometimes do the young minister great harm by encouraging him to think too highly of himself. An Army Chaplaincy has some advantage in this respect. The Colonel does not customarily arrange a tea in your honor, nor does the local paper print your picture together with a column or two of laudatory comments. All this makes it so easy to put ourselves at the center of the parish, at the center of too much conversation, and finally, alas, at the center of our own thinking. The men of the parish are soon lost. They want the friendship of a man who has put away childish things. Unless a man has the courage to tear himself from the center of his living and put the Lord of Life there his usefulness is finished.

The wise man does not look upon himself as an actor set upon the sacred stage of the Sanctuary. He has enough humility to be willing to be the stage, on and through which, the great past of faith and tradition may be heard. If a

man is humble enough to be a stage, he may be great enough to reveal the presence of his Lord.

If we do not humble ourselves we are so likely to slip into resentment and self-pity. I like to remember that it was "on the same night in which he was betrayed" that Jesus broke the bread. He did not allow resentment for the past or apprehension about the future to keep him from ministering to his friends and his betrayer. He did not say, "Your bodies for me," but "my body for you."

When resentment is uncontrolled and slips over into self-pity, the end of all usefulness is near. I remember the exact words of a dear friend who was fighting the battle for his own soul. "I have almost," he said, "but not quite gotten over that most despicable of all things—self-pity." Why should we fall prey to self-pity so readily? There are just as many people from all other walks of life who have had to spend some time under the harrow. These people are members of our parish. Often they are quiet sufferers. Unless we can find a way out of our darkness we cannot lead them. The blind still have trouble leading the blind.

Some Ways in Which God Can Help Us

We come now to the closing item for our consideration. It is to consider some ways in which God can and will help us—if we are willing. It is our fundamental conviction that God can do all that needs to be done in any situation, with any man, providing he has all that man through whom to work. So often we hear men say, "I must make a change." Sometimes the only change possible is within ourselves, and usually that is the only one needed. Years ago one of my Seminary classmates was most eager to leave what he described as an "impossible situation." Finally I wrote him about a possible opening, but he was no longer interested. "I have just discovered," he wrote back, "that the trouble is not in the church but in me. I might just as well fight it out here as anywhere." He is still having a successful pastorate after more than twenty-five years.

God is not nearly so interested in saving men from difficulties as in saving them in the midst of trouble. Redemption is not usually a release from problems; it is the restoration of a fellowship where we are. The place of difficulty is frequently the place of revelation. The Psalmist knew that when he said, "He made darkness his hiding place." The voice frequently comes from the cloud. One of my dear friends, after passing through many bitter experiences, was able to say, "When depression becomes deep enough it becomes dependence. I have paid a great price for that experience, but I do not think I have paid too much."

What a help it is to us when we discover that God is not simply a spectator but a divine participant in the struggles of his children. He offers us, in the heat of conflict, the kind of fellowship we can share in no other way. When we try to hold back from the hard places our fellowship becomes less real. And yet, we do try to shirk contests which offer no crowns. Moses did that. "Who am I," he asked, "that I should—bring the Sons of Israel out of Egypt?" God's answer was, "But I shall be with you." The fellowship of the Presence was his best reward. We do not meet God by inviting him to attend our little tea parties. We find him when we accept his invitation to join some work crew in a dark and needy corner of the world. Even the divine Builder must have some unseen foundation stones. But those same considerations which lead us to believe in any future existence suggest that the form and mode of that existence will enable us all to share in the satisfactions of a finished whole.

Moses stands as the eternal symbol of unfulfilled hopes. He was not allowed to cross the river Jordan into the Promised Land. He had waited forty years for that privilege. He had freed his people from slavery, trained them in freedom, fed them in the wilderness, written their

laws and established their religion. But he could not enter the Promised Land. Why? I do not know. Maybe he was too old. Maybe he had sinned. There are some things which can be done only with clean hands. We are told that it was in the heart of David, King of Israel, to build a temple to the most high God. But he being a man of war and having his hands stained with blood was not permitted to carry his plan into execution. One of the older biographies of Moses suggests God speaking thus to him. "You doubted yourself and I forgave you that. You doubted me and I forgave you that. But you doubted your fellow man and that I cannot forgive." Maybe his disqualification was age, sin, doubt or infirmity. But for all he is the symbol of the men who gather churches others serve, or build church buildings which others occupy, or plough the ground and plant the seed for another's harvest. He might have felt frustrated or bitter or vindictive. But instead, he sent for his successor, Joshua, and blessed him. How was he able to do that? He knew God was in that place. The promise, "I will be with you," still held. He enriched his life where he was. When life cannot be broadened it still can be deepened. It often happens that the death of a dream coincides with the birth of a soul. Either side of the Jordan will do. God is on both sides.

"Faith," says Josiah Royce, "is the soul's insight or discovery of some reality which enables the soul to stand anything that can happen to it in the universe." You know that reality is God. This is his world. He is shaping it. Maybe we should be grateful rather than discouraged when we "find it hard to be a Christian." It may mean the Potter is still working on the clay. There are spoiled vessels which must be made over. The Father cares enough to want to reshape our lives. He likes his material. He wants it finally in His image. Often life pushes down upon us. We feel we are being crushed. Actually we are being remade. He uses different treatments. Sometimes he tries pleasure and then pain, or success alternated with failure, or joy, or despair or sickness. We resent the whirling wheels of the Potter. We feel the hands shaping us are cruel. We complain or cry out. But be thankful to be still worked upon and not "cast in God's contempt apart." We may have lost faith in ourselves. We may be weary of the struggle. But God has not lost faith in us. His purpose still holds.

What Is a High-Potential Church?

The Rev. Graham R. Hodges
Ticonderoga, N. Y.

A GOOD friend of mine, recovering from the building and bringing into life one of our large churches outside an eastern city, said that the term might well be "hypertension." He had just returned from Florida, where he had been sent by a benevolent and well-heeled parishioner who didn't want to see his pastor develop heart trouble.

Africa had her Livingstone; India her Carey; and Macedonia had Paul. America's fast growing new residential areas have pastors of "high potential" churches. It is indeed a thrilling, gruelling, exciting, and rewarding task, this business of being the pastor of a church where the fields are so white and eager for the combine.

Ask any man who's done it. They may

say "never again" but there's a light in their eyes which cannot be put out. Many ministers are good for only one trip in such a church but they can have a real sense of satisfaction if they have done well the tasks which such situations offer.

This phrase "high potential" is a good one. The only bad thing about it is that we restrict it too easily to churches which offer, in the next few years, an opportunity to build a building, increase the budget, and run the membership list from four to four hundred. The term is just too good to waste on our suburban frontiers, though our headquarters must have some nomenclature to distinguish the old from the new.

For the sake of the record, though, let's examine some highly potential situations often not thought of in that light. What about the rural parish from which come many of the young couples now moving into the suburban areas?

Here is a grand opportunity for a man with vision: The church was established in 1810. The present building, still in excellent condition and possessing a grace and solidity seldom found in new structures, was erected in 1842. For twelve years its ministry has been spasmodic. Four different pastors, only one of whom was Congregational. It is rural. Average attendance is 40. Within two miles lives 600 non-Catholic people. No other Protestant church near. What a chance for even the most myopic minister!

Here is another tremendous field, as reported in the New York *Times* last November 15. New York City social agencies and our own Broadway Tabernacle conducted a survey and found in that vast town of 8,000,000 the section possessing the worst recreational facilities was just west of the Great White Way playground—from Fiftieth to Fifty-eighth Streets between Eighth and Tenth Avenues. Starving in the midst of so-called plenty.

There, in this area, live 5,000 persons under twenty-four years of age. The section is called by the survey report "forgotten." These people live in a social, recreational, and religious vacuum. Said Albert Penner, pastor of Broadway Tabernacle, which is adjacent to this area: "If Broadway Tabernacle Church could solve this problem, it would add a dimension of strategy to Protestantism which hitherto has not existed." Talk about high potential!

This area has not the aura of attraction of a society church nor the desperate heart-tug of the worst slum section. Yet, what a challenge! As a country boy now serving a small town and rural parish I am simply staggered by such a problem and bow to those men now serving in such difficult urban sections. And it is true that one could labor for years in such a field without a spurt in church membership or budget. The main result would be in changed or salvaged lives.

Another high potential is the town church. Maybe the town is church poor already, but there are plenty of opportunities. The pastor can get to know his flock intimately. His schedule is looser, meetings are not so frequent and civic demands are fewer. There is a better chance to work with individuals instead of just heads of organizations. And the church has a standing in the town it does not possess in the paganized city.

The minister, if he is half a person, has a chance to know and influence the local banker, the hospital superintendent, the political bosses, the school principal, the local editor, and others, whom in a larger place, would be too remote and busy. Things can be done by the churches in a small town which are impossible in the city. High potential!

Now, is there any church which is not high potential? True, there are a few churches which should be combined, federated, eliminated, or moved. But, granted that there is a need for a certain church in a given location, this fact alone makes its potentialities infinite. Is there not plenty of room everywhere for the lifting of private and public morals, for changed hearts, for redirected lives? Is there not room for infinite growth in

grace among the mature saints as well as in the newer additions?

The potential is there. And those among us not presently burdened with the details of building and paying for a physical structure have the far greater task of recognizing and developing the inexhaustible and infinite capacities of the individual mind and spirit entrusted to us. Wherever there are men and women, boys and girls—there is a high potential church.

Why Not Remember What You Read?

The Rev. William A. Cousins
East Rockaway, N. Y.

IF you've been having difficulty in remembering what you read, your troubles may be all over now. There is no longer any necessity to struggle to remember only to discover at a crucial moment that you have forgotten the relevant word or the pertinent material which could have meant so much had you remembered it in time. Nor is there need any longer to whip your mind and beat your spirit in order to sensitize your brain cells and stimulate your memory. Least of all is there any excuse for blaming a poor memory on the weakness of your mental faculties and on the inferior quality of your mind. Now with complete ease and perfect confidence you can learn to remember what you read.

Fairly helpful techniques have been developed, removing much of the guess work from memorization and making it relatively easy to remember. The old "hit or miss" method of memorization and recall has been outmoded by newer and more efficient forms of easy learning. The idea of the labor saving device has entered the field of the intangibles in recent years in the form of better reading techniques which make it easier to recall material that once has passed through the mind. Simply by employing a more efficient technique of absorbing material from the printed page and a more successful way of keeping it in your mind, inclinations to forget and difficulties with recall can be quickly overcome and may be completely eliminated.

After all forgetting is more of an expression of poor habits of work rather than a mark of an inferior mind. When you excuse your poor memory, what you really mean is that you've never really tried to remember. In most cases of memory failure you probably never had mastered the material in the first place. Usually what is needed is a more efficient manner of memorization and a more effective method of recall. If you have an inclination to forget, stop blaming your mind and blame your method. Experiment until you find what for you is a successful way of improving your memory and increasing your mental effectiveness. There is no need for you to be enslaved by the read and forget habit. You can learn to remember what you read. These suggestions may help you.

I

Learn to respect your mental powers. Why disrespect the faculties of mind which have been given you. Too many times that is exactly what you do—you console yourself that your mind isn't much. You delight in your poor memory. You say that your mind isn't capable of holding anything and consequently keep it stored with nothing whatsoever. There's where you are completely wrong. Even if you only possess an ordinary mind, you would still be wrong. The

average individual possesses at least four or five times more brainpower than he habitually puts to use. What you need to recognize is that your mind is completely capable of doing the job at hand and entirely capable of learning to remember what you read.

William James has an encouraging word for those who disrespect their powers and who despair of their abilities. "The human individual lives far within his limits; he possesses powers of various sorts which he habitually fails to use. He energizes below his maximum, and he behaves below his optimum. His life is contracted like the field of vision of an hysteric subject—but with less excuse, for the poor hysteric is diseased, while in the rest of us it is only an inveterate habit—the habit of inferiority to our full self." Respect your mental powers. Learn to believe that they are capable of doing the job. Don't console yourself into inferiority or damn yourself into mental helplessness.

Make your intentions known to your own mind. Don't allow your mind to wander to pleasanter subjects and to more congenial topics. Set yourself to master the material, tense your muscles and steel your mind a time or two. That way you will block out all random thoughts and stray interests that would normally absorb your time and interfere with your reading, causing your attention to wander. The way to do that is extremely simple. Just speak sternly to yourself. Say, "What's the matter with me? Enough of the read and forget habit. I'm going to remember what I read." After affirming your intentions, relax and allow your mind to absorb the material.

Sounds silly, doesn't it? But don't be skeptical, for there is a method in its madness. An affirmation of purpose followed by the relaxation of your mind and body will allow the creative faculties to work more easily and more efficiently. Too many times you whip your mind and beat yourself to do a job which you are entirely capable of doing with complete ease and with little effort. That's unnecessary. The best way is to affirm your purpose before you begin to read, then allow your mind to do the job it is completely capable of doing. There is no sense in mental whipping and in needless pressure. Give your gray matter a chance, it's better than you think.

II

Go on to make sure of the meaning of the material. Don't just read the words. That's a common error. There is a temptation to believe that the more you read and the faster you speed over the pages the better off you'll be. Such thinking is pure nonsense. What is vitally important is to grasp the meaning of the material. To log a hundred or a couple of hundred pages a day isn't going to do you a bit of good unless you are aware of the thought behind the words. At this point you must set yourself straight about the purpose of the printed page. Except for some modern poetry, words aren't just strung together to fill a page or make a piece. They are put together for a purpose. Your job is to understand what the purpose might be and what message the words are trying to express, a much more difficult job than the majority of us are inclined to believe, especially in the fields of philosophy and religion.

The reasons are obvious. The realms of philosophy and religion deal with the abstract and the intangible issues of life. Such material is more difficult to understand than a purely descriptive piece or just an ordinary article. In these fields usually a little mental wrestling is required. There's another reason too. Currently the higher intelligentsia exhibit the contemporary confusion of life in their thinking and writing, and consequently mistake the vague for the profound. That makes the reader's job more difficult. A great many articles and books can be crossed off your list as merely mixed up, vague and confused. Learn to by-pass the fellow who insists upon ignoring the canons of clarity and the

points of good order. Don't feel bad about it either, for he doesn't deserve a hearing. In most cases though you'll have no difficulty in understanding what you read. Just make sure of the meaning. When you do, it lightens your mental load considerably and makes recall much easier than if you were to recite by rote.

Pause to refresh your memory. The Coca Cola people have capitalized upon the magic of a moment stolen from the humdrum and the ordinary. Learn to do that too. Pause and refresh yourself. The break in industry has helped overcome fatigue and has helped increase production, and it can pay rich dividends for you. Don't force yourself to continue reading when your head begins to nod and your eyes begin to wink. Stop and rest a moment. Take a cat-nap if necessary. After you have rested a few minutes, check up on what you have read. Concentrate on the material covered. See how much you remember. What you are unsure of, go back and check. You will be surprised at the amount of reading you can recall without further checking. But checking the doubtful parts will help refresh your memory and will set them more firmly in mind.

III

Discriminate and discard. Don't try to remember everything you read. Concentrate on what's important to you. Decide on what material can further your growth or increase the effectiveness of your work. Since there is no hard and fast rule to follow, you must be the judge. Once your mind is made up, discard the meaningless material and forget the unessential matter. Don't fret about it. A little knowledge, like a little wine, may be commendable for its own sake, but you can try to have too much of a good thing, and the practice of being too greedy about remembering everything isn't practical for a preacher. Anyway you've got enough to remember without overloading your mind and taxing your patience. In reading keep your mind on your purpose and almost immediately your critical faculty will discriminate and discard. When you pick up the printed page, ruthlessly pass over the nonessential and fearlessly forget the trivial. With less to concentrate on, your memory will improve.

Learn to mull over the material you want to remember. Visualize in odd moments and in your spare time the material that you want to keep with you. The practice of frequent recall helps set it firmly in the mind and holds it readily at your command. A good way to do that is to sum up in your own words the material you want to remember. Mentally run over it a time or two, then forget about it and go about your other duties. When you have a free moment, run over the material again. Check and recheck to make sure you have it accurately in your mind. Then forget about it completely. Do this as many times as you believe it to be necessary. Mental mulling is the best way to set material in the mind and the only way to keep it there. The results will surprise you.

Space your reading. Not all the jobs in the world can be accomplished at one sitting. Confining all your reading to one day a week is about the worst way to operate. Read a couple of hours a day. Put your books aside. Give your attention to other tasks. Engaging in a mighty effort is one thing but mental craming week in and week out leads to mental jamming, making your mind dull and your perceptions insensitive. By spacing your reading you'll be able to cover more material and you'll be more able to correlate what you've read and bring it into meaningful relationships. Unless you can tie your reading into meaningful patterns, all the material you gather will be worthless. Rest and reflection is needed to allow the subconscious forces of your mind to work in constructive ways to accomplish the purposes to which they have been set. "A little now and a little then" is a much better practice than "all at once."

IV

If you wish, try a mental gimmick. All kinds of things have been tried by men to improve their memory. A favorite in the past when people were less sophisticated was to tie a string on the finger. The only trouble with the string is that you usually forget that the string is a reminder to remember. Lately we have become more refined in our methods of prodding the reluctant brain cells. Rational association is one way. Relate something that doesn't have much meaning or make much sense to the meaningful and the familiar. Take a list of figures that you need to remember and tie them into meaningful patterns with something with which you are already familiar, like your wife's birthday, or whatever. Acrostics is another way. Put your mind to work and figure out a mental gimmick of your own that will help you to remember what you've read. It's not as hard as it may seem to be.

If you have trouble remembering what you read, try these aids designed to improve your memory and to increase your efficiency. While they won't work wonders, they may help. Anyway, don't grow satisfied by consoling yourself that you can't remember what you read. You have been blessed with a mind capable of dealing with most of your problems and sufficiently able to turn you into a good craftsman as you work at a calling that should challenge your best and demand your finest. Use your own method of memorization if you want, borrow another's method if you will, but don't ignore your reading nor forget the wealth of relevant material which, if you could remember it, would make you a more dynamic preacher and a more vital person.

Apologies: No! Apologetics: Yes

The Rev. Fred Smith
Centralia, Kansas

MR. PREACHER: I wish you could just see the close-up environment of which I am the center at the present moment. The environment is the result of a small pamphlet lying—(I beg your pardon! In this suspiciously minded age, when skin security outruns spiritual salvation, I must use a better word. I proceed)—A small pamphlet is resting on my desk in front of me. At the head of an extensive review of books addressed to Christians I find this quotation: "The plight of the theologian who desires to express Christian truth in terms of modern thought is indeed pitiable, but he must do the best he can with the material presented to him by this incoherent age. In the long run, this confusion of minds may be no disaster for Christian doctrine, for it is plainly a challenge and an opportunity to develop for the first time a philosophy from within Christianity itself."

The quotation was taken from a book published by that usually lucid thinker: W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, bearing the title, "The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century." "Surely," I thought, "for just a little while the eminent Dean has forgotten both his New Testament and the history of the Church." From my acquaintance with the directive and clarifying power of the Holy Spirit I have yet to learn that, at any time or under any circumstance in any place, the condition of a Christian theologian can or should be described as a "plight." Once let a theologian or a preacher accept as wisdom the conclusions of those who

"know the works of God but not God himself" and that man is liable to talk of his Christianity in terms of apologies instead of apologetics. That is why I have suggested in the title of this article the need for presenting the faith in terms of apologetics but never in terms of apologies. To this end I have a few things I would like to convey to my brethren in the ministry.

First, it is well to foundation yourself in the eternal truth of God before coming to the last revealing of science. That is to say, to know how to make your energy effective you had better know first how to construct the right environment. I have it, at this moment. On the one hand there is the Bible, in various translations; on the other: a complete concordance of the Holy Scriptures. So panoplied I know that all *affirmations* concerning the universe or the ongoings of humanity are the fulfillings of the word of him who said that he would send "the Spirit of truth" to guide men into all truth (John 16:13). There you have it, plain and simple. No preacher of the eternal Gospel is ever in a plight. He is ever in the light. And that leads me to comment on a further quote from the Dean, as given in the aforementioned article.

Here it is: "We should indeed be defeated if we trembled at every accretion of knowledge as a potential danger to the central affirmation of the Christian faith." I should say we should. They who are tremblers in such a case evidently were not on the right base in the first place. When you meet with those who are given to trembling in the way mentioned by the Dean, as I have done in instances far too many, almost without exception you will find that the trembler has substituted a formulated creed instead of the living Christ as the foundation of his Christianity. Words change in their meanings from time to time; but worths remain. Wise is the man who works in the light of this distinction. Many years ago I happened on a verse in a hymn which I learned there and then. The words and worths of that verse are with me for gain to this day. Here are the words:

We may not think our father's thought,
  Our lips their creed's may alter.
But in the faith they dearly bought,
  Our hearts shall never falter.

That is to say: Apologies for our faith? Never. But apologetics for the faith? Forever. Looking at my Bible, plus the Concordance, I know that both give an Amen to that. But (since space is limited) the dictionary is also close at hand to give further light on this distinction is a remarkable way.

It is open at the words: apology and apologetics. There is given the history of the words. I read: "Apology has undergone a remarkable change from its old sense of a valiant defense—as in Justin Martyr's *Apologies for the Christian Faith*—to its present meaning of humble confession and concession." Here, right to our hand and theme, we have an illustration of watching our worths while acknowledging that words change in meaning.

My exhortation to all preachers is that they keep clear this distinction. Then will they remain apologists for the faith, in the manner of Paul and Peter, who never presented apologies (in the modern sense) for the faith, but were ever ready to present their apologetic for the faith. Would you know how to do it in the manner of these great souls? Then turn to Paul's *Letter to the Philippians* which he wrote "in the defence and confirmation of the gospel," or to *The First Letter of Peter* wherein he counsels the followers of Christ to "enthrone Christ as Lord in your hearts. If anyone asks you to give an account of the hope which you cherish, be ready at all times to answer for it."* This is to know the meaning and the might of presenting our Christian faith at all times and in all places not in terms of apology but in terms of apologetics.

*Knox's translation.

Life in the Local Church

Let Him Be Your Minister

One of our churches publishes the following suggestions in a small, four-page pamphlet.

EVERY sincere pastor tries to reach the ideal expressed in the words of Jesus when he said, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

The only justification for a pastor's position in a community is found in his desire and ability to minister to the needs of his people. His authority to lead or instruct his flock is vested in him by society because it recognizes his devotion to the service of humanity.

Your pastor knows these things, and it is his constant prayer that he will not lose sight of them no matter how successful or unsuccessful his work may seem to be.

But he also knows that he cannot be your minister unless you *let* him be your minister. It is his to be an earnest pastor; but it is yours to be a cooperating member of his congregation. He cannot be your servant unless you help him to help you.

The following suggestions are made to the end that you may help your pastor in his ministry to you and your church.

1. *Give him the benefit of your doubts.* Like all human beings he has limitations, and can only do his best. Give him every chance to do his best; and make up what he lacks through your own work and leadership.

2. *Tell him what you would like to see accomplished by the church.* It will help him to know what you think ought to be done. To be sure, he may be unable to do it, but if you do not share with him your thinking and experience, he surely cannot profit from them.

3. *Let him lead you in Public Worship.* This means attend church! You and your pastor cannot expect to see one another in true perspective unless you bow together regularly before the values which are timeless and the things which underlie the lives of men and nations.

4. *Listen to what he says,* but judge him by the spirit in which he says it. Custom requires him to talk about human experiences which can never be fully expressed in words. His speaking is motivated by genuine good will and a sincere desire to enlighten men along the road to spiritual maturity. It is this spirit which he seeks to convey; let it bind you to each other no matter how you may differ in words or definitions.

5. *Invite him to your home.* Do not wait for him to call. His routine calling may get him to your home no oftener than once a year. But when you give him invitations with definite appointments, his calls can be more frequent and convenient to you both. And when he calls, let him be about his business. See that he becomes acquainted with all your family. Talk of your lives and interests, of religion and church. He has little time to spare for purely social engagements.

6. *Make him your friend and confidant.* He has lived in many other people's lives and studied many books. He knows life's major problems and the ways that lead to their solution. Go to him for counsel. Tell him your temptations, your fears, your hopes, and seek the benefit of his training and experience.

7. *But because he is your friend,* do not expect that he will show you special favoritism. Your pastor is, in truth,

"servant of all," and he must minister to all without discrimination.

8. *And remember, he is not the Church!* You and your pastor are united by greater considerations than your attraction for each other. The Church has work to do, and personalities are secondary to her spiritual unity and the fulfillment of her mission to the world.

"Rise up . . . the Church
for you doth wait;
Her strength unequal
to her task;
Rise up, and make her great!"

The Honor Society

One of our churches has set up the following requirements for an honor society.

THE requirements for the *Honor Society* have been worked out and and may be secured in mimeographed form from the church office. It appears that the provisions of this study program are of interest not only to the young, but also to many of the adults. So, I am recording here, in abbreviated form the requirements for anyone who wants to receive the certificate of the Honor Society of Church:

1. Name the books of the Bible.

2. Know the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20:1–16.

3. Read and study the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7, and recite the Beatitudes from memory. (Matthew 5:3–12.)

4. Be able to locate and tell the stories of: Adam and Eve; Noah; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Moses; Joseph; Samson; Saul; David; Solomon; One of the Prophets; Daniel.

5. Explain the background of the two periods of slavery of the Hebrew people (in Egypt and Babylon).

6. Read all of the following Psalms and be able to quote five of them from memory: 1, 8, 19, 23, 24, 46, 51, 67, 90, 91, 95, 96, 100, 103, 104, 116, 127, 130, 137, 139, 148, 150.

7. Read all of Genesis.

8. Read Ruth.

9. Read Esther.

10. Read Job.

11. Read Jonah.

12. Read Daniel.

13. Read Luke.

14. Read Acts.

15. Read Galatians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, and Philemon.

16. Read James.

17. Memory Work: Learn the following: John 1:1–14; I Corinthians, Chapter 13; Hebrews, 1:1–4 and 2:1–3; and Luke 10:25–37.

18. Here are listed eleven of the 51 parables of Jesus, and the student is asked to be able to locate them by chapter in the Gospels.

19. Church History and the Sacraments: (a) Give a short oral description of the founding of the Congregational Church; (b) Describe how a Congregational Church is organized; (c) Outline the history of Union Congregational Church; (d) Explain the meaning and significance of The Lord's Supper and Baptism.

20. Prayers: Write a prayer of your own, and say from memory the following: The Lord's Prayer, Invocation, a Grace before meals, the General Confession, and a Benediction.

21. Regular Church, Church School or Pilgrim Fellowship attendance.

The Busy Minister and His Church

One of our churches with a membership of over 1200 members made a study of the demands upon their minister's time and energy, received comments from the ministers of ten other churches of similar membership, and then wrote the following statement:

WE are now face to face with the realization that the tenor of church life has been gradually changing until the minister now finds himself not alone the preacher and pastor, but also the administrative head of a vast organization which demands more and more of his time and energies.

This is a universal situation and has caused much concern and study among the larger churches.

We, in this church, have made a survey of our problem and have consulted many churches like our own. These churches have made necessary adjustments, and we feel that the time has arrived when we must do likewise.

The following facts point up some of the circumstances which have brought about heavy demands on our minister's time and strength:

1. Our 1200 resident members have moved from the downtown areas where they resided in our previous minister's time, and are spread over half a dozen suburban or outlying communities.

2. Churches universally have moved away from contacts with people in masses, and now operate in smaller groups where the individual has a better opportunity to make his talents count.

Concerned with the religious and educational life of our church are the various boards and committees including the Deacons, the Deaconesses, the Religious Education Council, the Women's Guild and the Young People's groups.

Then there are organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, the Colonies, Basketball and Bowling Leagues and committees for the annual Canvass, for visitation on new people and prospective members.

All these, in addition to publishing a church paper each week, require a certain amount of responsibility on the part of the minister.

3. Each Church should devote some of its interest to inter-church and denominational activities. While many of our members are connected with, and active in, such work, our minister—of necessity—has become involved in twenty such organizations and subsidiary committees as the local Council of Churches, the Young People's Council, the local Ministerial Association, the local Associations of Ministers and Laymen, the State Evangelical Committee, and is a member of National Boards.

With the strong feeling that this situation must be corrected, we make the following recommendations:

1. That we frankly recognize the fact that routine courtesy calling is impossible and that groups should be organized to assist the minister in this sphere, augmenting the splendid job of calling the Deaconesses are performing.

2. No telephone calls, unless urgent, should be made to the minister until 11:00 A.M.

3. In order that the minister shall see those who have the greatest personal needs for seeing him, it is agreed that he shall observe a regular day for appointments. Thursday shall be set aside with time in the evening, if necessary, for those who cannot keep a daytime appointment. We also urge friends of the church and members to come to the Minister's Study on this day when necessary to see him if humanly possible, rather than asking him to come to their home. This will enable him to help ap-

proximately twice as many people in the same space of time. But, recognizing inevitable extenuating circumstances, we urge members of the church to call the minister if such occasions arise.

4. In order that the church may be fairly represented at the most important conclaves of inter-church work, but that the minister should not be overloaded with more meetings to attend than he can possibly cover, we hereby urge the minister to limit, at his discretion, the number of inter-church agencies and occasions to approximately 15 per cent of his time, and we urge the people of the church to accept it as a principle that where the minister cannot go because of time schedule, lay officers of the church will represent our fellowship and that will be considered acceptable by all.

5. In order that the minister and the church shall have the satisfaction in the minister's calling of feeling that he is placing first calls first, we propose that we all accept the following standard as an order of importance in calling:

(a) The very first calls go to people in the hospitals, to those seriously ill in their homes and those in serious convalescent need of pastoral encouragement.

(b) Those who are in need of pastoral counsel and help but cannot come to the Pastor's Study.

(c) Parallel with these, as the occasions arise, shall come counseling with those who have signified their intention of uniting with the church, those special needs connected with death in the parish, and periodic visitation among the shut-ins, including visits for Communion.

6. It is urged that no group leave details for the minister that the group could possibly do for itself.

7. In order that the church may enjoy the ministry of one whose health and family life is an example for the rest of us, we propose that we expect our minister will observe a day of rest and recreation, usually on Monday, and that he will do this without explanation or apology. We recommend, with the approval of the Standing Committee, that the minister be permitted to be absent from his pulpit not more than five Sundays each year—on alternate months—a satisfactory supply being provided. We also urge all members to avoid calling the minister on his day of rest, except in cases of immediate need or family crisis.

FROM A SEMINARY HILLTOP

The Rev. Ralph W. Jeffs
Tehachapi, Calif.

(To the Class of 1954, Pacific School of Religion)

Below, the twinkling city lies,
Seeming so bright and fair;
But from it jangling voices rise.
No peace is there.

Here in this high and holy place
The light of truth and love
Reflect in every upturned face
The One above.

Why must we leave this place of peace
To walk among the crowd?
Is not the climber's hard-won ease
To be allowed?

No! Softly One says, "Feed My sheep;
Descend into the town.
You who have scaled this sacred steep
Must take Me down."

Ah, Christ! If Thou this earth did tread
To save the weak and frail,
Can we for selfish comfort dread
To walk the vale?

Our hearts, O Christ, with longing fill
To make the valleys Thine;
Go with us from this holy hill
And through us shine.